

# Administrative Wires

## New England Cluster

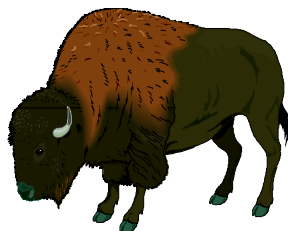
January 2000

### Park Profile

#### Weir Farm National Historic Site (WEFA 1953)

735 Nod Hill Road  
Wilton, CT 06897

Hdqtrs: 203-834-1896  
Fax: 203-834-2421



Weir Farm National Historic Site, preserved by the National Park Service with its private partner, the Weir Farm Trust, was the summer home and studio of American Impressionist painter, J. Alden Weir.

Weir Farm is the only national park site in Connecticut and the only national park dedicated to an American painter.

The 60 acre site includes Weir's home, studio, barns and outbuildings, a visitor center, and a second studio built by sculptor, Mahonri Young.

Julian Alden Weir (1852-1919) summered at this country retreat for nearly 40 years.

The Burlington House Visitor Center offers small exhibits, an 18-minute video orientation to the site, and an interactive computer program featuring works of art created at the site.

The landscape that served as subject matter for many of Weir's paintings and other works of art by Childe Hassam, Albert Pinkham Ryder and John Twachtman, remains largely intact. The Historic Painting Sites Trail allows visitors to actually stand where the artists did and compare paintings with the scene that inspired them. The trail visits 10 sites where paintings were created.

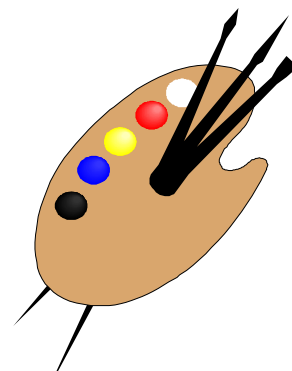
Artists are encouraged to bring sketch pads or easels and use the property for artistic inspiration.

Annually, the Weir Farm Trust's Visiting Artist Program offers five professional artists a unique "residency" experience and exhibit. The resident artist exhibits are open to the public.

### Weir Farm Administrative Staff

Administrative Officer  
Pat Clark  
203-834-1896 ext. 20

Administrative Clerk  
Karen Scott  
203-834-1896 ext. 22



<http://www.nps.gov/wefa/>

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# Housing and Property Management

## Status of Housing Policy

The House Sub-Committee on Appropriations and the Department of the Interior continue to question aspects of our proposed housing policy. WASO will provide them additional information by the end of January.

## Rent Notices

Parks should have installed the latest version of QMIS. Rent notices are due to tenants by February 11<sup>th</sup>. Except for tenants subject to an isolation factor, there is no rent change for the New England Cluster this year.

## New Northeast Survey

A Northeast private-market, rental-rate survey will be conducted in the spring of this year resulting in revised rents for March 2001. Training will be held late in the year on the new survey and on the new Windows-based software which will have more report options.

## New Fleet Card

We are still working with WASO gathering data needed for producing the new Bank of America fleet/fuel charge cards. Current estimated delivery for the new cards is sometime in April.

## Admin-Maintenance Conference



Planning continues on a joint administration and maintenance conference in early spring.

We have invited Ernestine Armstrong, NPS Property Program Manager, to participate. We expect to ask the field for issues for Ms. Armstrong to address.

## Timely

## Report

## Completion

For reports that combine responses from the entire cluster or region, WASO expects a single, complete package. Frequently, a number of parks are unable to meet a given report deadline, resulting in the entire cluster/region being late with its submission.

Does anyone have any suggestions on how to address this important issue?



## Understanding an Internet Address

Sometimes Internet addresses, directory paths, links and file names change or disappear without notice. On the Internet, there is no way of alerting users regarding changes in every Internet address.

If you get an error message, just try again later, because that site may be temporarily down.

If you continue to get an error message, try entering just the prefix and the host name rather than the complete address (host name, directory path, and file name). The directory path and/or file name may have changed, but it is likely that the host name remains the same. Then just click your way to the information you want.

### Example:

Prefix =	HTTP://
Host Name =	WWW.DOC.GOV
Directory Path =	RESOURCES
File Name =	USTTA_INFOR.HTML

# Information Management

## Computer-Based Training

Computer-based training (CBT) is delivered using Internet technology . CBT provides an "any-time, any-where" distance learning approach to employee development and education.

NETg, the CBT provider selected by the NPS, is the largest computer-based training vendor in the market.

Employees can take advantage of one NETg training course or all 550 training courses.

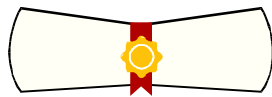
The broad categories of training include:

- Information Technology (IT),
- Desktop Computing,
- Process Management,
- Project Management,
- Business and Personal Skills.

As an example, the Desktop Computing category includes courses such as word processing, spreadsheets, and graphics software, as well as the Microsoft Office 97 products (MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and MS Access).

In addition to technical courses, there are courses in business writing and communication, negotiation training, leadership, meeting presentation, EEO, team building, and much more.

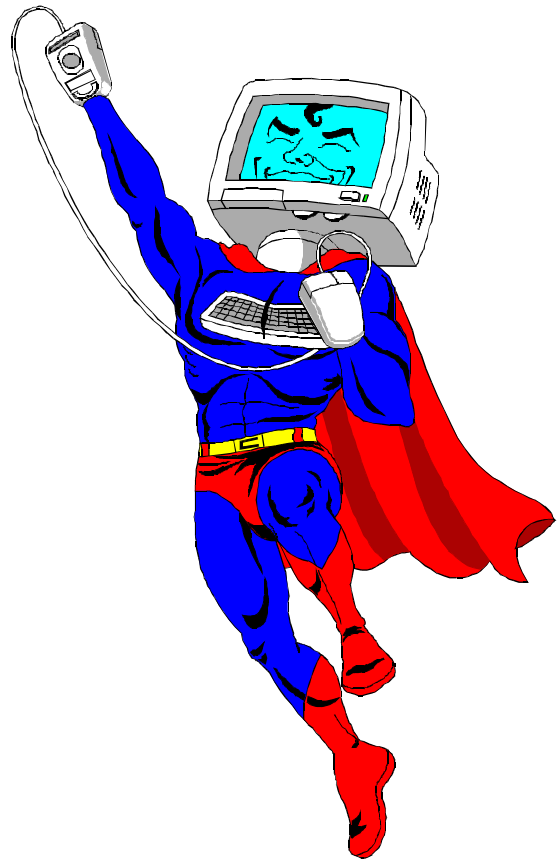
Many courses offer GED and college accreditation.



Training for **Lotus Notes** will be available through this computer-based training program.

The NETg web site offers an up-to-date listing, with descriptions, of all available courses (<http://www.netg.com/catalog1.htm>).

For additional information, contact Training Manager Will Brimberry at (202) 565-1028.



## How to Apply for a CBT License

CBT licenses are distributed through the Regional Employee Development Officers (EDO).

Employees download the training modules to their personal computer. To access the CBT server, an employee must have an account ID and password.

User support is provided by 800 telephone and e-mail services.

If you have questions regarding NPS computer-based training, contact your EDO, Career Field Training Manager, or an NPS Training Center.

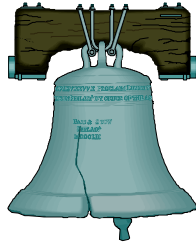


Look for other training opportunities at <http://www.nps.gov/training>

# Human Resources Management

## RESOURCE CAREERS

Resource Careers, now officially implemented by Director Stanton, establishes a GS-5/7/9/11 career ladder for 24 professional cultural & natural resources management (RM) positions.



Standardized Position Descriptions (PD) were classified by WASO for the 24 positions, as well as for 9 technician positions (GS-5, GS-6, GS-7). You can use these PD's if at least 80% of the PD describes your position. Professional GS-12 resources management PD's are available for optional use; but, your Servicing Personnel Office must classify them.

Resource Careers has several components:

- Position Descriptions,
- Evaluation Statements,
- Position Management Guidance,
- Implementation Instructions, and
- Professional Development Program Guide.

All components were developed by park managers, cultural & natural resources managers, and human resources professionals. The components have undergone field review and testing.

To implement Resource Careers, offices must review positions and organizational relationships of all employees at or below GS-11 who are assigned substantial RM responsibilities. Reviews and implementation must be completed by May 2000.

Each park and central office will receive the Resource Careers Manual.

Resource Careers material can be seen in its entirety on the NPS Intranet at "[www1.nrintra.nps.gov/careers](http://www1.nrintra.nps.gov/careers)".

## ACHIEVING DIVERSITY THRU STEP

Achieving Diversity through the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) - a step-by-step guide on implementing this hiring strategy – was sent to all Northeast region parks

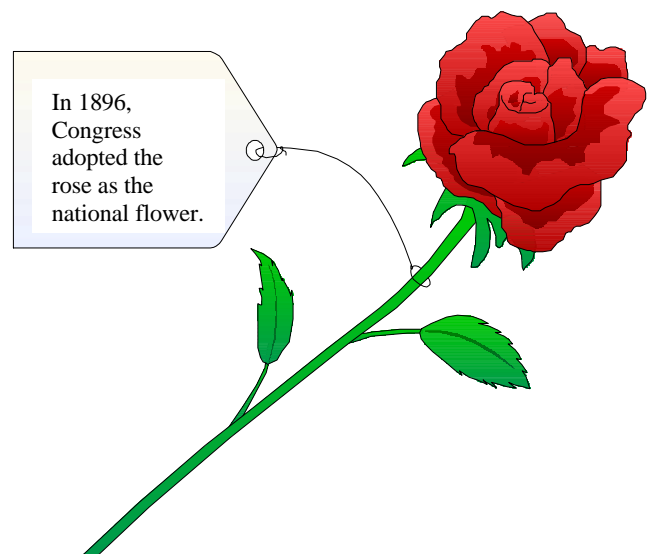
With an emphasis on diversity, STEP targets the hiring of students from local area high schools, vocational schools and colleges for temporary positions. STEP will be used to recruit for the year 2000 summer season and will be evaluated at the end of the season.

By implementing STEP we can:

- Increase diversity at the parks
- Develop an advocacy with the schools
- Standardize procedures and formats
- Simplify sharing of candidate information
- Evaluate the success of our efforts
- Have new temporary employees immediately identify with the NPS mission.

Workshops were presented on the strategy and implementation of this program. Your park recruitment office should begin this process as soon as possible.

If you have any questions on STEP, please contact your assigned Personnel Management Specialist at BOSO Human Resources.



# Human Resources Management

## Lunch Bunch Programs



**Please join us  
for these  
educational  
programs.**

**Bring your  
lunch!**

Tuesday 2/15/00; 11:00 - 1:00

"I guess that's why they call it the Blues"

(EAP Seminar)

Learn the signs of depression, the effects of depression at work, and current treatment.

Tuesday, 3/14/00; 11:30 – 12:30

Travel, Training and Overtime

George Brown explains who gets paid and how much.

Tuesday 4/11/00; 11:30 – 12:30

Job Search - USAJobs and Merit Promotion

Bill Oelfke explains the process to apply for Federal jobs using USAJobs (OPM's website) and some guidelines that must be followed under the Merit Promotion Plan.

Tuesday 5/16/00; 11:30 – 12:30

"It's Your Money - Saving for the Future"

Your retirement savings and investment plan should be important to you. Ken Shea shares highlights of the Thrift Savings Plan.

Tuesday 6/13/00; 11:00 – 1:00

"What, Me Worry?"

(EAP Seminar)

What, you worry? Who doesn't?

This lively program looks at the universal problem of worry in its many forms – toxic and non-toxic, motivating and disabling.

Tuesday 7/18/00; 11:30 – 12:30

Overtime vs. Compensatory Time

George Brown explains what's the difference and why you should care.

Tuesday 8/15/00; 11:30 – 12:30

Who's On First?

George Brown and Frank Harris explain Alternative Work Schedules, Flexiplace, 1<sup>st</sup> Forty - Who's in the office today?

Tuesday 9/19/00; 11:30 – 12:30

Take it or Leave it/Use it or Lose it

David Day and Ken Shea explain Federal Family-Friendly Leave Policies, Use or Lose situations, and Leave Restoration.

## Professional Liability Insurance

Effective in FY2000, the National Park Service must reimburse eligible employees up to 50% (not to exceed \$150) of the annual premium for professional liability insurance.



Eligible employees occupy positions (as documented in an official position description) which meet the legal definition for supervisor, management official, or law enforcement officer.

Offices and parks should have already received the Professional Liability Insurance Policy. Please ensure that all potentially eligible employees, human resource specialists, and financial management employees are provided with a copy of this policy.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Human Resources Bulletin 99-05, Public Law 106-58 and Public Law 104-208.

# Human Resources Management

## Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

The TSP Open Season runs thru January 31, 2000.

Sign up for the TSP. Change the amount of your contribution. Change the way your contribution is allocated among the three investment funds.

Call Ken Shea or David Day in Human Resources for further information and for the necessary forms.

### HOW THE TSP IS CHANGING

Now: Monthly valued plan. Transactions processed once a month. **October 00:** Daily valued plan. Transactions processed each business day.

Now: Account balances and transactions processed and shown in dollar amounts. **October 00:** Account balances and transactions processed and shown in dollar amounts, shares, and share prices.

Now: Three investment funds: Government Securities Investment (G) Fund, Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund, and Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund. **October 00:** Five investment funds. In addition to the G, F, and C funds, there will be the Small Capitalization Index Investment (S) Fund and the International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund.

Now: Allocations of future payroll contributions processed through agency human resources offices during Open Season. **October 00:** Allocate future contributions at any time by using the ThriftLine or the TSP Website, or by submitting Form TSP-50 directly to the TSP record keeper.

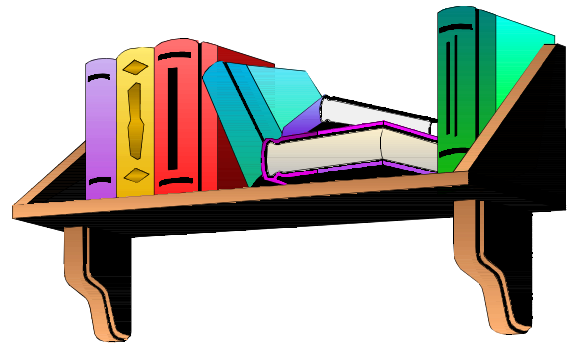
Now: Open Season May 15 - July 31 and November 15 - January 31. **May 00:** Open Season April 15 - June 30 and October 15 - December 31.

Now: Participant statements issued twice a year, for the periods ending April 30 and October 31.

**October 00:** Quarterly statements for the periods ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31.

## New York / New Jersey Labor-Management Relations

The Northeast Region - AFGE Local 3432 Partnership Council continues to meet quarterly to discuss Labor-Management Relations in the New York/New Jersey parks, and to develop cooperative projects that benefit all employees.



## Handbooks

An OWCP Handbook, Getting the Injured Employee Back to Work, was completed in November 1999.

An Employee Orientation Handbook for all permanent and temporary employees is currently being developed. A task group comprised of Human Resource specialists, Administrative Officers, and Union Stewards is working on this handbook. The goal is to have the handbook available by summer.

On January 7, 1894, the earliest surviving copyrighted motion picture (81 frames, lasting about two seconds and showing Thomas A. Edison's assistant Fred Ott sneezing) was made in the movie studio at Edison's laboratory in West Orange, NJ.

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On December 31, 1897, Thomas A. Edison gave the first public demonstration of his incandescent lamp in Menlo Park, NJ.



# Financial Management

## Premier Lodging Program

The Premier Lodging Program is GSAs answer to the shortage of hotels that offer the Government rate.

Boston is the first of several cities to be included in this program.

GSA put out a solicitation for bid for hotels that were willing to establish a Government rate and guarantee room availability. Eight hotels have been awarded contracts (see below).

These hotels will set aside blocks of rooms for government use. To be guaranteed a room, your reservations must be made 10 days in advance of travel. If you call less than 10 days before arrival and the hotel offers you a room, they can only charge the government rate.

GSA brochures will be available soon and information will be posted on their website at [www.policyworks.gov](http://www.policyworks.gov).

<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Rate</u>
The Boston Park Plaza	162
The Colonnade	178
Doubletree Guest Suites	162
Marriott Cambridge	192
Marriott Copley	192
The Swissotel	162
The Westin Copley	188
Sheraton Boston	186



## Travel Management Centers

Most importantly, none of us may enter into any Travel Management Center (TMC) contracts.

The contracts are currently being worked on at the Bureau level. New contracts are scheduled to be effective in March 2000. The existing TMC contracts have been extended and will continue to be extended until new contracts are in place.

Two differences - Existing TMCs are now authorized to charge a service fee of appx \$10; some areas in the Northeast Region are already being charged. Also, if electronic tickets are available, the TMC may charge a delivery fee of appx \$10 for each hard copy ticket delivered via overnight or courier service.

Expect to hear more information from the Regional Comptroller's office later this month.

## Discount Parking for Logan Airport

Logan Park & Go is located on the Chelsea/East Boston line - 1 mile, appx 5-minute ride from the airport.

They have government rates of \$8 per day and \$56 per week until March 2000; \$9 per day and \$63 per week after that.



You may use this for official as well as personal travel. Just show your government ID when leaving the lot.

A 24-hour shuttle service is included in the price.

- Shuttle always at the lot to take passenger to the airport, with pickup at your car;
- Regular shuttles through all terminals at the airport at 5 to 10 minute intervals;
- The same drop-off and pick-up location at each terminal.

If you would like more information, their Internet address is [www.loganpark.com](http://www.loganpark.com).

# Financial Management

## New Regulations Pending

At the January Boston Federal Executive Board meeting, GSA's Office of Governmentwide Policy announced new travel-related changes coming soon in the Federal Register.

**This is just a heads up – be sure to wait for details from the Regional Office for final guidance on these changes.**

1. The Government will be able to pay for breaks at conferences. There was no dollar amount specified; only that it is for light fare and not a meal. This will not reduce an individual's per diem.
2. Regular Approving Officials will be authorized to sign for 25% above per diem for lodging if the employee is attending a conference and is required to stay at the hotel associated with that conference.

This also applies to Government-sponsored conferences. Once the location of the conference is determined; if there is no hotel willing to book a block of rooms at the government rate, then up to 25% above per diem can be negotiated.

This is separate from the "Actual Lodging" rate that is still available with higher approvals.

3. The Permanent Change of Station (PCS) regulations are currently being rewritten. The new regulations are to be released in April 2000. The revisions are intended to put the regulations in plain English and simplify the process.

For those who facilitate PCS moves, there are plans for training by GSA in the Boston area, probably in May.

Effective January 14, the mileage reimbursement rate for federal employees who use privately owned vehicles for official travel changes from 31 cents to 32.5 cents.



# HAPPY

# NEW

# YEAR !

